



# USAID | PHILIPPINES

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## SUCCESS STORY

### HIGH-VALUE VEGETABLE FARMING:

**Giving a big lift for vegetable farmers  
in Sugbongcogon, Misamis Oriental**



L/Alejandrino

"Our lives are much better now that we're producing high-value vegetables. My weekly income is more than I earned in three months when we planted native potato. GEM taught us what to plant, how to improve our methods, and even how to negotiate with buyers!"

**Ricky Aragua, member  
Ampianga-Kidampas-Kaulayanan  
United Neighborhood Multi-Purpose  
Cooperative (AKKUNIMCO).**

They used to subsist on root crops. Now, farmers in Barangay Kaulayanan, Sugbongcogon town in Misamis Oriental can afford to go to nearby Cagayan de Oro City to shop and eat in fast-food restaurants. This is a real treat for Kaulayanan farmers, according to Ricky Aragua, a member of Ampianga-Kidampas-Kaulayanan United Neighborhood Multi-Purpose Cooperative (AKKUNIMCO).

Some of the farmers have even managed to send their children to college while others, like Aragua, have started building houses in the town proper so their children can attend high school. Still others are renovating their homes and buying household appliances.

All these have occurred since the 312 farmer-members of AKKUNIMCO were introduced to high-value vegetable farming. With assistance from government agencies, USAID's Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) Program established a techno-demonstration farm in the municipality of Sugbongcogon, Misamis Oriental Province in Mindanao to help area farmers diversify into vegetable production and augment their incomes.

The techno-demo farm introduced appropriate farming technologies to maximize production of highly marketable crops suited to the area's agro-climatic conditions. Planting cabbage, sweet peas and carrots has increased the average income of AKKUNIMCO farmers from about P400 (\$8) per week to over P4,500 (\$90) per week. This enabled the farmers to re-establish their rural community, abandoned at the height of armed conflict between government forces and communist rebels in the late 1980's.

GEM guided the farmers in the proper planting of seeds and helped link farmers with input suppliers, traders, buyers, and farm-oriented government agencies. After learning how the market works, the farmers are now able to negotiate prices with buyers, and are scheduling the planting of specific crops to coincide with market demand.

"Our lives are much better now that we're producing high-value vegetables. My weekly income is more than I earned in three months when we planted native potato. GEM taught us what to plant, how to improve our methods, and even how to negotiate with buyers!" says Aragua who also serves as a barangay councilman in Kaulayanan.

Fifteen of the coop members have recently formalized a contract to supply 500 kilos of cabbage weekly to the Northern Mindanao Vegetable Producers Association Inc (NMVPAI) for shipment to institutional buyers in Manila.

"Engaging the Sugbongcogon farmers is a big boost to the sustainability of our supply," said NMVPAI president Marcelino Remotigue.

AKKUNIMCO is among the 112 farms and cooperatives being assisted by the GEM Program and their partners to achieve USAID's policy objective of peace through development in Mindanao.